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ABSTRACT

This paper traces the history of professional meetings of Seventh-day Adventist Librarians from 1951 to 1976. It uses primary historical documents, primarily the proceedings of the various conferences, to trace the history of these meetings, the content of the papers presented, and the resolutions and actions taken. These meetings gave the Seventh-day Adventist librarians, particularly those from the church's colleges and universities, a chance to become acquainted, meet common professional goals, and work on resolving common problems. Of particular interest to them was the preservation and proper handling of the church's printed materials. The most important project initiated during this period was the publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index. (MAB)

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A HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LIBRARIANS PRIOR TO THE FORMATION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LIBRARIANS

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The earliest documented meeting of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) professional librarians occurred in February 1951 at Emmanuel Missionary College (EMC) in Berrien Springs, MI. The minutes of the 1957 meeting state that two such meetings of librarians had been held "in recent years," and noted that the results of the 1951 meeting had been negligible. In 1951 the librarians present agreed that an SDA periodical index was an urgent necessity, recommending that it be undertaken by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC).

Most meetings of SDA librarians prior to the formation of the Association of Seventh Day Adventist Librarians (ASDAL) in 1981 took place in conjunction with meetings of SDA academics held every 3-6 years during the 1950s to 1970s. These meetings had various names, including Intercollegiate Departmental Conference, North American Higher Education Convention (NADHEC), General Conference Department of Education Quadrennial Session of College and University Teachers, and North American Division Quadrennial Council for Higher Education (QCHE). Meetings were held in 1951 at EMC, 1957 at Washington Missionary College (WMC), 1961 at Southern Missionary College (SMC), 1965 at La Sierra College (LSC), and 1968 and 1976 at Andrews University (AU). Meetings were ordinarily held in August, and were divided into sections by discipline.

Each SDA college and university library sent representatives to these meetings. In early years there was often only one representative per institution, but attendance in later years more closely resembles that of a current ASDAL conference. The librarians' section of these meetings usually published extensive proceedings of its meetings. These proceedings were more thorough than anything currently being produced by ASDAL, and are a delight for the historian because of their completeness. They always include a list of attendees and actions taken by the group. In addition they include either summaries or virtual transcripts of meetings, summaries of or the complete text of papers presented and often copies of supporting documents.

The 1951 meeting was held February 4-7 at EMC in conjunction with the American Library Association (ALA) midwinter meeting in Chicago. No official proceedings as such were produced. However, the Pacific Union College (PUC) Library contains a bound copy of PUC Library Director Lois Walker's documents from that meeting, which include a tentative program, transcripts of some of the papers read, and recommendations. Anna Blackney of EMC chaired the meeting. The topics discussed were a mixture of general professional subjects and those of specific SDA interest.

The program included the following topics: library techniques, circulation, censorship, book selection, buildings, compact shelving, departmental libraries, bibliographic instruction and orientation, student assistants, what the faculty expect of a college library, a proposed SDA periodical union list, SDA microfilming, and an "index to denominational periodicals."

SDA librarians love surveys. Dorothy Ferren reported the results of a survey of 11 SDA college libraries for their circulation policies. Harry Casey strongly advocated censorship of the materials coming into the libraries. "The word censorship brings to mind the perusal of letters and correspondence by experts or critics to eliminate any spurious, offensive, objectionable material that might be detrimental to a person, country or nation. I would therefore assume that censorship of books in our libraries by those concerned would eliminate similar objectionable features and characteristics in the light of the best standards and principles of the SDA denomination." He quoted extensively from Ellen White's writings, particularly about fiction and surveyed SDA college libraries on their censorship policies. He presented lists of characteristics that might make books suitable or unsuitable for SDA college libraries. Among the unsuitable characteristics were obscene and profane language, extreme realism, humorous references to illicit sexual relations, portrayal of nudity, uninteresting books that in all probability will not be read, modernism, ridicule of God, popular novels, fiction (except classics), fiction not needed for classes, books on theater and dancing, books for graduate students, novels based on the life of Christ and other Biblical characters, and popular fiction. Virtually any book other than a technical one was subject to censorship. Many present agreed with him that "in the light of the Spirit of Prophecy [Ellen White], we are a little lax in the censorship of books." Attendees reported that war books, Betty McDonald's writings and fiction required by the Department of Education in

Alberta were problems. However, one librarian stated, "If we had only books whose sentiment could be underwritten by our denomination we would not have a library of real comprehensiveness." Casey concluded that SDA librarians should and do censor materials. "It certainly behooves us, in the light of the Spirit of Prophecy and these days of shifting and slipping standards and the nearness of the end, to take unusual care in the choice of the very best literature for our youth." In Lois Walker's hand are these notes: "What about books on communism?" and "**Belles on Their Toes** has pages on girls smoking."

Floda Smith reported on departmental libraries in the liberal arts college. She advocated departmental libraries for the sciences, so that they could be near the laboratories, and reported the experience at Union College (UC) with its departmental libraries in physics, chemistry, biology, educational/curriculum, nursing, the academy (secondary school), and the elementary school.

Alfred Brandon of Atlantic Union College (AUC) reported on SDA library science instruction. He expressed a need for training school librarians, and concluded that only PUC had a real program in library science. Barbara Phipps, in her report on training student assistants, stated, "It is this start in the library methods class and the work in the college library that gives the impetus for professional library training, and librarianship as a career. While none of us would insist that we have been an unmitigated blessing to the profession, there are six of us professional librarians in our colleges today as a result of Miss Blackney's requirement at EMC of library methods for student assistants. Her patience in training us, and her enthusiasm for quality in library service inspired us and started us toward a satisfying career."

Stanley Brown's presentation, "The Size and Organization of the College Library Staff," contained 12 pages of detailed SDA library statistics, concluding that more staff was needed. Arlene Marks studied the possibility of producing an SDA periodical index, and estimated the cost of 7,000 entries per year (without inclusion of union conference or division papers) to be between $3,500 and $9,000 per year. Estimating 100 potential subscribers, she concluded that libraries could not afford to pay $350-$900 per year for an index. She suggested heavy financial support from the colleges, with the GC and North American SDA publishers as two other potential sources of income, and suggested Takoma Park as the place of publication. She also spoke of the need for retrospective indexing, and special SDA subject headings. "If we could find a young man

(or woman) with the 'bibliographic urge' and practical business ability of Mr. Wilson, a theological training, some practical knowledge of the library, a prodigious capacity for work, and a willingness to devote his life to the compiling of a denominational index, the success of an index might be assured, at least from an editorial standpoint."

Anna Blackney revised the 1951 resolutions before sending them out. They were as follows: that teachers be more active in selecting and censoring general reading books; that librarians and library architects be involved in new library buildings, modular construction be used and departmental libraries be discouraged; that bibliographic instruction be given freshmen, library workers and upperclassmen, and that library training for teachers be available; that SDA libraries use the ALA Library Score Card to survey themselves and use it to improve library quality; that there was too much dependence on student labor, and that specific standards for the number of professional librarians based on the size of student body be used; that a union list of SDA periodicals be compiled; that a cooperative SDA periodical index be begun, specifying the procedures; and that SDA materials be microfilmed.

Alfred Brandon chaired the 1957 meeting held at Washington Missionary College, for which it was admitted a "very heavy agenda had been prepared." Those present saw shop talk as being a major benefit of the meeting. The SDA periodical index was again a major issue. D. Glenn Hilts was elected interim chairman, to serve as coordinator until the next such meeting. The list of those present reads like a who's who of Adventist library pioneers, including Oscar Schmidt of AUC, Barbara Phipps of EMC, D. Glenn Hilts of LSC, Jannith Lewis of Oakwood (OC), Lois Walker of PUC, Myrtle Watrous of SMC, Floda Smith of UC, Anna Blackney of Walla Walla College (WWC), Theofield Weis of WMC, Alfred Brandon of the College of Medical Evangelists (CME), and Mary Jane Mitchell of the SDA Theological Seminary.

Included in the 95-page proceedings is an interesting introduction of SDA libraries and librarians, including statistics on staff, collections and buildings. For example, at that time the EMC library had 52,000 volumes, 2 3/4 professional staff, 1/2 clerical staff, and 225 student hours per week. The building was seen as "inadequate; new addition promised; construction plans not yet definite." Open forum discussions on a number of topics were held. In discussing circulation policies it was noted that "teachers' loans were discussed, but

no solution reached." The entire text of the 1953 edition of Hilts' "Classification Scheme for Works of Mrs. E. G. White" is included in the proceedings.

The proceedings include the entire text of a number of papers that were read. "Cooperative Indexing of SDA Periodicals" was presented by Lois Walker. She gave the history of other cooperative indexing projects, including Catholic (unsatisfactory), the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) and a group of 5 seminaries. In a survey, Walker found that only LSC, UC and WMC were currently doing SDA indexing, with La Sierra's the most complete. However, there was no uniformity among them. She also noted many problems of indexing periodicals, especially denominational ones. For example, she asked, "How does one find subjects for rather elusive materials such as an article by Elder Branson entitled 'How Long Halt Ye Between Two Opinions,' being a dissertation on staunch and careful Adventism?" She also analyzed ways of sharing indexing cards and the potential cost of a cooperative index. She figured that indexing 16 periodicals would take 17 hours per month for a total of 857 cards per month. She estimated the cost per college per month to be $198.10, not including professional time. "If other colleges are like PUC, each can have all the student help desired and no questions asked." She allowed that if the indexing were to be done in some central place with each college paying its share, considerable propagandizing might be necessary. In an appendix, Walker included ATLA's procedure manual. Walker indicated that a list of SDA subject headings was needed, and called for retrospective indexing.

Presentations were given by Hilts on La Sierra's indexing, and by Weis of the WMC index of SDA periodicals, which ceased in 1945 due to lack of funds. Previously it had been a National Youth Administration project (which ceased in 1943). Hilts led an afternoon workshop on indexing SDA periodicals. He noted that La Sierra's use of Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) with an SDA supplement constituted subject cataloging rather than indexing. Included in the proceedings is La Sierra's index procedure manual.

There was an extended panel discussion entitled "The College's Objectives, the Curriculum, and the Library," which largely revolved around accreditation issues. Jannith Lewis noted that the Southern Association required a minimum annual expenditure of $30 per student for library expenditures. She also

reported that a visiting evaluator had noted that "You are brave. You have Karl Marx on the shelves."

Floda Smith presented "Book Selection of Academy Libraries." She sent a questionnaire to 65 SDA secondary schools (statistical data not included in the proceedings). She noted that many used the GC book list for academies (1940, rev. 1954) and suggested that the college librarians might assist in supplementing and updating this list possibly by utilizing rotating summer workshops. The librarians present urged that properly educated librarians be hired by academi s.

Anna Blackney presented the results of a questionnaire on bibliographic and library science instruction. AUC and PUC were the only institutions that reported a library science minor. Mrs. Mitchell called for standardizing bibliographic instruction, noting that "consistently the AUC men know how to use the library," because religion majors there were urged to take a library science course. Graduates of other institutions did not do as well in the Seminary Library.

Richard Schwarz answered No to his own question, "Shall we Have a Union List of SDA Periodicals?" at least not until there was a periodical index, concluding that it would have limited usefulness. He then outlined how it could be done, with his reluctant cooperation.

The librarians didn't spend all their time in meetings. They took tours of the Ellen G. White Estate, Review and Herald Publishing Association Library, Seminary Library, National Archives, Library of Congress, and University of Maryland Library.

Round table discussions were held on a large number of issues, including evening library use [cooperate with the dorms], the function of the faculty library committee [not usually active, though one used it as a parachute to get out of difficulty], professional reading, and phone calls for patrons. Yet another survey found that one urban Adventist library hired a student to answer the phone for community students because many young ladies use the library in the evening and it seemed advisable to maintain a service so that parents could call, while another library only called students to the phone when summoned by administrative officers of the school.

In 1957 the librarians' section voted many resolutions and recommendations, including establishing a mimeographed SDA librarians' newsletter to be edited by Floda Smith, clearing student records with the

library before they could check out of school, distributing Hilts' SDA subject headings, establishing a committee to prepare an SDA supplement to the ALA code, reproduction of La Sierra's SDA periodical index, microfilming Ellen White periodical articles and the **Review and Herald** (general church paper), calling on the General Conference to assist in increasing the number of professional librarians in SDA colleges, establishing a minor in library science at Potomac University to train teacher/librarians, improving college bibliographic instruction, calling on the GC Education Department to sponsor a trained librarian to assist academy librarians, developing a bibliography of SDA publications, having SDA librarians meet every four years with other college faculty, developing a cooperative who's who of SDA librarians, and using the Seminary list of religious books as a core list for overseas schools. Most importantly, the section voted a lengthy SDA periodical index working agreement.

The proceedings of the 1961 meeting at Southern Missionary College take only 28 pages, primarily because they include summaries rather than full text documentation. However, this meeting also had a full agenda. Oscar Schmidt chaired the meeting because Hilts was absent due to illness. Rather than presenting papers, specific and general problems were discussed, for which summaries are given.

The following topics were among the many discussed. Grace Prentice discussed "Indexing of Denominational Periodicals." Because the Union College and Loma Linda University (LLU) libraries were not indexing the journals that they had agreed to do at the previous meeting, two titles were transferred to other libraries. Lenoa Silver discussed "Recruiting of Librarians." She asked, "Is the stereotype idea of a librarians justified? Introvertive, too bookish, unfriendly, sarcastic, too busy to help, etc." There was discussion of the possibility of asking Andrews University to offer a master's degree in education with a major in library science. AU Library Director Mary Jane Mitchell described the Dewey/Library of Congress (LC) reclassification project at Andrews. Lois Walker and Mitchell described their experiences in planning a new library, and Mitchell told of some of the misadventures of building the new James White Library (AU). It was voted to revive the newsletter edited by Floda Smith, and 28 other problems were "briefly noted"!

Two sections of resolutions were voted in 1961--new resolutions and revised versions of 1957 resolutions that had not been acted on. New resolutions included: that SDA publishers give library discounts,

that **Ministry** magazine use LCSH and the Hilts list of SDA subject terms in its subject index, that the GC list the romanized version of the actual name of foreign institutions along with the English name under which it appears in the **Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook**, that the GC Education Department adopt a plan of giving grants-in-aid to assist students to go to library school in return for a two year internship in an SDA library, that study be given to centralizing indexing of SDA periodicals, that thanks be given to those church entities that had acted on the 1957 recommendations, that the proper training of school librarians was urgent, that SDA publishing houses use LC cataloging in publication (CIP) service, and that college librarians have faculty rank. Seven previous recommendations were revised and re-endorsed, most importantly the index working agreement.

The 1965 meeting was held at La Sierra College. Thirty-five librarians attended, representing all the institutions of higher education in North America and some from academies and hospitals. As usual, the agenda was very heavy, and many presentations were made on a variety of topics. A number of library vendors made demonstrations of their products. A full-day field trip was taken to Forest Lawn Cemetery, Glendale Sanitarium Library, the Voice of Prophecy, Huntington Library and Art Gallery, and a Newport Bay boat cruise. In addition to the joint minutes with the other sections, the librarians produced a 123-page set of proceedings. Oscar Schmidt chaired the meetings.

Eight recommendations were made in 1965. They were as follows: a request for a discount from denominational publishers at least equal to those received from other publishers, as well as making materials available on a standing order basis; a recommendation to "our" publishers to include their offerings in **Books in Print**; a recommendation for the forthcoming **Review and Herald** index to be similar to Wilson indexes and be made available in book or key-punch card form and that the GC Publishing Department set up an editorial office to expand the **Review** index to include other SDA periodicals; a recommendation to the editors of the **Journal of True Education** to make its index a true annual index; a request that Andrews University prepare a full-page advertisement for colleges with minors in library science to appear periodically in **The Youth's Instructor**; a recommendation to the GC Education Department to require that a demonstration library with a competent librarian be required as part of the teacher training program at each college or university having

an elementary or secondary demonstration school.

The 1968 meeting was held at Andrews University. The only documentation found was the librarians' section report contained in the 694-page official report of the conference entitled "Relevant Teaching for Revolutionary Times." At this meeting there was a joint meeting of librarians with faculty from English, modern languages, administrators, board chairmen, and secretaries of education. The topic of the meeting was "improper literature" (i.e. containing profanity and/or sexual realism) allegedly being taught in some academies as a result of its being taught in the colleges. There was consensus that reports of the situation were exaggerated. The minutes of the English section note that no one at the meeting expressed the view that all non-factual narrative was condemned by Ellen White.

George Summers presided at the librarians' section meetings. He also presented the keynote, "Librarianship and the New Technology," which was in harmony with the theme of the section, "Academic Libraries of Tomorrow--Today." Grace (Prentice) Holm presented a paper on the feasibility of changing an academic library from Dewey to LC classification. This paper, along with Summers' keynote address and a paper by Barbara Phipps on library orientation, are contained in full in the proceedings. Several library vendors made presentations, most having to do with then-new technology.

Thomas Geraty of the GC met with the group to again discuss the proposed index to SDA periodicals. He reported that the college administrators had looked with favor on this idea in their meeting at Walla Walla in 1967. However this action had never been reported to the librarians. An ongoing SDA Periodicals Index Committee comprised of Mary Jane Mitchell, D. Glenn Hilts, Floda Smith, George Summers and Margaret von Hake was appointed to work on this project.

A panel discussed the ALA Freedom to Read Statement and book selection in the SDA library. The desirability of obtaining copies of doctoral dissertations written by SDAs was discussed, and a continuing librarian recruitment committee was formed. The group toured the libraries at University of Notre Dame and Goshen College.

The most important resolution of the 1968 sectional meeting concerned the **Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index**. The section recommended that it be sponsored by an educational institution or the GC, that

an experienced indexer do the work, that an experiment be done to determine cost, and voted a list of 26 journals to be indexed (including **Spectrum**, the only one not published by a church organization).

Elwood Mabley was elected interim chairman of the section until the next meeting. The general council also made several recommendations affecting libraries. These were: to recommend an immediate and substantial increase in library funding for the purchase of materials for English departments, that librarians make every effort to choose materials compatible with the aims of Adventist higher education, that ways to improve bibliographic instruction be sought, that junior college credits not be accepted for a certificate in school librarianship, that library statistics be a part of the GC Education Department statistics program, and that a librarian be appointed as a member of the GC Education Department to coordinate services in all types of Adventist libraries.

The next meeting, in 1976, was again held at Andrews University. The proceedings of this meeting total 173 pages, and include much supplementary material (especially items handed out by Don Yost of the GC Archives). Fifty librarians are listed as participants, the largest group to date. Elwood Mabley gave the keynote, followed by a presentation on the history of the **Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index** given by Grace Holm, and computer use on SDA campuses by Alice Gregg, with a panel reaction. Grace Holm, James Nix and Mary Jane Mitchell were appointed to meet with board chairmen, presidents and finance officers to emphasize the urgent need to properly finance the index. Interest groups met for mini-sessions, and Johnnie Givens of Austin Peay State University made a presentation on the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) "Standards for College and University Libraries." Apparently this was the first instance of the SDA librarians inviting someone not a church employee to make a presentation at their conference.

Robert Olson of the White Estate gave a presentation entitled "Playing the Numbers game!, or the Placement of **Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White**." In it he made a number of interesting suggestions, including the idea that if Adventists could easily borrow the book from a library they might not then feel the need to purchase their own copy, thus unjustly enriching the errant author. He especially urged that libraries obtain multiple copies of the various White Estate rebuttals of the work, and that these be made readily available to the public.

Maurice Hodgen spoke about the need for oral history projects, and Bill Hessel about the status of faculty rank and tenure for Adventist librarians. Marley Soper led a tour to three Chicago libraries--the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago, the John Crerar Library and the Newberry Library. Jim Nix gave an important speech entitled "Cogitations of an Adventist Bibliophile," in which he discussed how to tell if an Adventist book is rare. He also pled for more cooperation among Adventist libraries in the preservation of Adventist materials. There were also presentations on a number of topics related to the preservation of Adventiana.

Margaret von Hake made a successful motion that the librarians meet every other year for a 2- to 4-day conference. Xerox was chosen to microfilm the Weis Index. Don Yost concluded the conference with a one-day seminar on the management of archival collections. Bob Cooper agreed to be the newsletter editor, and Charles Davis was elected interim chairman.

Only three other recommendations were voted at the 1976 session, the last such meeting held. These were a funding formula for the **Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index**, that a professional librarian be part of academy accrediting teams, and an endorsement of the ACRL statement on faculty status of academic librarians (which statement is included in full in the general report of the conference).

In conclusion, it is clear that Adventist librarians in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s clearly felt a need to meet and discuss mutual problems, conduct cooperative projects, develop professionally and get to know each other. In those years when the GC discouraged Adventist professionals and academics from forming their own professional associations, these meetings were enormously beneficial. Both the quantity and quality of the discussions are exemplary and gave ASDAL a good tradition on which to build. The need for the **Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index** and attempts to develop it were a constant throughout this period, as was the need to preserve the Adventist heritage and properly index, organize, distribute, catalog and describe its documents. Other important ongoing topics were the need to improve the quality of Adventist school libraries and training of school librarians, recruiting Adventist college librarians, and faculty rank and tenure.

It is also clear that meeting only every four years was not sufficient to be able to effectively conduct business, although meeting at the same time as other Adventist academics surely was positive. The need for

a newsletter to bind the members of the profession together is also apparent. Twenty volumes of the **SDA College Library Newsletter** were published between the late 1950s and 1981. The newsletter had an uneven publication schedule and participation by colleges was less than complete. It is doubtful that a complete file of these currently exists in one location.

Many of the "traditions" of ASDAL, from the too-full agenda to the fun and educational tours, were set in this pre-ASDAL period. Present SDA librarians can only be thankful that these librarians laid such a good foundation on which to build. If they had been able to solve all the problems that were discussed how little there would be to do now!

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